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COMMONWEAL

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The League of Nations and the West

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS expelled Russia and undertook to organize whatever help individual members might give Finland. This was an unexpectedly lively action, but it by no means clears up the status of the League and it is doubtful if it will seriously affect the present Russian-Finnish war. The Communists claim that a movement is on foot to shift the present German-Ally war into a united front anti-Soviet war, and they have much evidence to back up their claims. The League would be a most unsuitable weapon to misuse in bringing about that tragic and desperate solution to present troubles.

Civilizations and Wars

Russia is admittedly outside the comity of Western civilization. That is something more than opinion, and such an eminent historian as Arnold J. Toynbee believes that "Eastern Orthodox civilization" has always been radically differentiated from Western civilization. But the League has never pretended to represent Western civilization. Parts of Islam, parts of the Far East, Ethiopia, remember, have been members, and the basis of union has been the world-wide but rather superficial trade relationship instituted by Europe and the political system which accompanied it in an even more superficial way. The League thus does not include the whole West and it does include members outside the West.

Should the League be made the over-all organization of Western civilization? Should a League or federation or whatever could be formed have as first purpose peace among its members or the guidance of relationships between its bloc of members and the exterior world? What is the desirable position of Western civilization toward other civilizations? All this arises around the League.

History is made cruel and bloody by the manner in which opposing civilizations have carried on their contests, and there is grave danger that the near future will fit snugly into the tradition. It is time to break that tradition. To the extent that one of the civilizations is Christian it must seek other means than war to perpetuate itself and to expand.

Christmas Lights in America

MR. BERNARR MACFADDEN has started a one-man campaign to have every light in America aglow on Christmas Eve from dusk to midnight. By impressive efforts, that include telegrams to every key person and major group throughout the country and large advertisements in some of the papers, he is striving to spread the conviction that a lighted continent will be a symbol especially appropriate to our good fortune just now. Not only will it repeat a traditional welcome to the Light of the World; it will be the best conceivable contrast and counterblast to the blackout in Europe. Mr. Macfadden is eloquent on his theme, and explicitly abjures "the spirit of boastfulness"; and we have no thought at all that he is anything but thankful and sincere.

What Do They Mean?

But if a universal burst of brilliance over the country is to mean merely that we are glad to be out of the trouble, and intend to stay that way, it would almost be better that every bulb, lamp and candle between our two oceans should remain dark. For it will mean that we are missing the main part of the truth. In a very real sense, there can be no unshaded radiance here while there is blackness elsewhere, for we are members one of another. This is a time for deep thankfulness, true; but it is not a time for imagining ourselves delivered, through some superior worth of our own, from the evils stalking elsewhere—as too many of us might be tempted to do by Mr. Macfadden's program of exultation. The worth lies partly in our institutions, partly in our geography; not at all in us. If we light all our lights, let us do it humbly and prayerfully: extending what material help we can, but especially interceding with the Light of the World to enter into His own in the hearts and minds of all men (ourselves included) leading them everywhere to brotherhood and peace.

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Measures Short of War

NO ONE in Wall Street's most glittering days could have aspired to a "corner" equal to that just reported to have been proposed by Secretary Morgenthau last spring at the time of the Czech crisis. The prospect of achieving so extensive control of certain strategic war materials as to make "have-not" aggressors offensively impotent taxes the imagination. Yet a treasury investigator went so far as to figure out the cost—$100,000,000 a month for buying up or refusing to sell the necessary military ingredients. And he believed an agreement between the United States, Russia and the British Empire would do the trick. The scheme was rejected as too expensive and national effort was directed to cushioning the shock of expected war. Since then Russia has joined the ranks of overt aggressors. That such a possibility was considered at all indicates what the right kind of world federation could do to keep potential aggressors at peace. The danger would be that the cards would be stacked for the "haves." Yet no nation can do without certain imports; how would the United States, for instance, get along without rubber, manganese and tin? While spectacular adventures at sea are keeping their peoples' heads up, France and England are waging an economic war to the death with the nation beyond the Rhine. If they should be successful, a new League with more effective sanctions may be set up. But if a freely constituted world federation is established on the basis of a negotiated peace, control of strategic war materials may be one of the most effective means of achieving, maintaining and developing peace with justice.

Dream and Possibility

New Center of Empire

THE IMPORTANCE of our northern neighbor has been steadily increasing over the past two decades, but it has not been a spectacular increase, and we have been prone to ignore it; we have been Samuel Butlers who thought only of Canada as a summer playground and a winter waste. We have forgotten that Canada is one of the biggest countries in the world, full of natural resources of every kind, and of some kinds which we ourselves lack and that a good slice of her territory has a relatively mild climate. War in Europe is rapidly changing our view. Dispatches announce the final completion of a working plan which may "leave Canada among the greatest of world air powers . . . the greatest air training center of the future world." Already Ottawa is referred to as "the geographic center of empire," Canada as "the arsenal of the British Empire, the source of supplies for Britain, and perhaps to some extent Britain's banker." And prophets are declaring that she "tends to play a new rôle in the ultimate peace settlement, very much larger than . . . at Versailles in 1919." Canadians themselves are recalling the prophecy of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, "The Twentieth Century is Canada's." And Stephen Leacock predicts that investment of billions of American and European capital will produce vast industrial development which will automatically involve intense immigration from less fortunate parts of the globe. If this should happen, and sparse population has been Canada's only weakness, we may see the day when there are two great North American powers instead of one, and we may profitably ponder now the possible consequences of such a development.

Canada's Century

Ohio's Not Alone

THE EDITORS of *Newsweek* are to be congratulated on their recent survey of the relief situation all over the country. It performed one very valuable service—informing the rest of us that Ohio was not the only place where relief conditions were bad. The political set-up in that state had, indeed, led to overemphasis in the news dispatches, for it isn't as much news to report that the poor of a city are having a bad time, and the relief administrators are worried about the future, as it is to report the acidulous interchanges between politicians of national eminence that can arise from such a situation. Denver, Detroit, Atlanta, Los Angeles, St. Louis, Birmingham would seem to have problems as well as Cleveland and Toledo, though Ohio's kettle of fish was probably the prettiest, until the Federal government stepped in. What is discouraging about all this is that there should be any difficulties at all approaching crisis proportions in dealing with a problem which is now over ten years old, and a problem whose immediate solution would surely not be over-difficult for the richest country on earth. Of course the deeper problem, the ultimate solution, of doing away as much as is humanly possible with the existence of want in the midst of plenty is far from easy. But it remains a flat disgrace that the bare necessities should not be certainly assured to those in need of them.

Feeding the Hungry

Nobody Loves the N.L.R.B.

THE HOUSE COMMITTEE investigating the National Labor Relations Board is doing a vague job badly. The anti-Labor Act and anti-Labor Board press manages to find thrust at it in almost every day's testimony statements of opinion which it can play up in a way apparently designed to react adversely to organized labor. The CIO and AFL join in

Do They Like Unions?

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the cry, each calling the Board partial to the other union. They thus endanger the law and the Board which have protected labor's right to organize, while at the same time their reciprocal complaints testify to general impartiality and fairness. Opinions of people the Board has ruled against are featured by the press as established proofs of fact, whereas if these disgruntled litigants had awfully good cases they would more likely take them to the federal courts, wherein the Board's findings of fact and conclusions of law could be reversed.

It was considered an open secret that Mr. Leiserson was at loggerheads with the other two members of the Board. But as initial witness, he provided a surprise by vigorously defending the Wagner Act and the Board and staff which administer it. The Committee quickly left Mr. Leiserson's main line of testimony and introduced a memorandum by one of the Board's regional directors. The press outlined Mr. Leiserson's disagreement with the other two members relative to the principles and method of determining the appropriate unit for purposes of collective bargaining—a knotty subject indeed—and his dislike of Mr. Witt. The New York *Times* (which has been under fire before the Board and is awaiting the Board's decision in an unfair labor practice case) ran the streamer: "Leiserson in Feud. . . . Assailed Rulings, Tried to Oust Secretary as Unfit, Unfair." This was typical treatment of the testimony. If anyone all day used the word "unfair," that word made the headlines from coast to coast. If the Labor Board, not being a high court of appeal, and not being preserved from stressful contact by massive stone pillars, lacks some of the judicial qualities of the Supreme Court, the Smith Committee investigating it, sprung from a reactionary wave in Congress, seems to lack the rudiments of judicial intent. The public needs to take care lest the attack on the Wagner Act and Labor Board "involve(s) turning back the pages of our history" (as Mr. Leiserson puts it) and undermining the whole position of labor in the country.

Non-War Item from Kansas

QUIET as the Western war has been in the main, the hero stories have begun to break through—especially among those individualists, the airmen. A young tyro from New Zealand in the British flying forces gave an account of himself in his first engagement that made all the papers. A handful of French soldiers put to the blush any military movie we have ever seen by cutting deep into Nazi territory past several active outposts, swooping down upon a whole detachment and bringing back its four leading officers in triumph. On their side, the Germans doubtless have their own candidates for Valhalla. And so it will go on, of course, and valor will be piled on valor in the fighting field. No one can remain unstirred by these things. But on that account it especially behooves us to keep our balance and to remember that courage is courage, wherever it is found. With particular pleasure we present a most authentic case of valor from Kansas. A flying lieutenant, Harold E. Neely, discovered in midair that his motors were dead, and directed the three men aft to jump. Two parachutes presently opened below. Desperately maneuvering his ship, he called again and again to the third man. There was no response; whereupon Lieutenant Neely decided he must try to land his ship, against almost incalculable odds, in an effort to save this man, instead of himself jumping to safety. The powers of heaven, smiling as they so often do upon bravery, brought him down without a scratch. Only then did he discover that the third man also had jumped, and hurtled to death because his parachute had not opened. This is tragedy. But this is certainly as thrilling as anything in the "Dawn Patrol"—and a lot less destructive.

Hero, Peacetime Variety

Brave and Happy Warrior

The Passing of Heywood Broun

THE DEATH of Heywood Broun is a severe loss for the newspaper world, the American labor movement, the nation's public life and for the church. The numbers and types of people at his impressive funeral at St. Patrick's Cathedral attest to that. A convert of only a very few months he was eager to speak and write as a Catholic, especially desirous of making known to his friends and to the world the path that led him to the household of the Faith after years of searching for the truth. It is provocative to speculate on the interest he would have aroused in Catholic things through his undoubted literary gifts, his ease of expression, his lightness of touch, his highly personal approach. Knowing the circumstances of THE COMMONWEAL, Heywood insisted that he contribute his column "Written from the Ridge" at a figure considerably below the modest sum we were able to offer him; he had planned to do this regularly beginning the first of the year. He had not been in contact with THE COMMONWEAL for long, but in the few short weeks of our acquaintance we had come to love him. There is no other way of expressing the feelings he inspired. Heywood was that kind of a person. Stories of his wit, his generosity and his zeal for the underdog, his fund of humorous anecdotes, his fights for the causes he believed in are legend. What impressed us most was the warm geniality which made him such good company, his Christian courtesy, his feeling and personal approach to the issues in which he joined. *Lux perpetua luceat ei.*

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Christians in Christ's Land

Christians who live—or have lived—in Palestine

By Donald Attwater

TYF yr hyn sydd o'r hyn fu, says the Welsh proverb: "What is grows from what was"; an obvious truth, a platitude, but none the less frequently forgotten. When confronted, for example, by the bewildering complexity of Christian bodies in eastern Europe and hither Asia we are apt to shrug and turn away from the impossible puzzle, without considering that a little examination of the past, "what was," might make it considerably more intelligible. And of none is this more true than of the Christians in Palestine, the Holy Land, the earthly home country of Jesus our Lord.

The little patriarchate of Jerusalem was carved out of that of Antioch by the Council of Chalcedon in 451, in order that the bishop of the Holy City might have a position worthy of the dignity and sacredness of his see (hitherto a simple bishopric); and it was a center of religious life to which pilgrims came from all parts of the world until, in the year 637, it was reduced to servitude under the Arabs ("Saracens"). But for very brief intervals it remained under the domination of Mohammedan powers until 1917; during this long period it was much reduced in population and the greater number of its people apostatized, deliberately or carelessly, to Islam. The Palestinian church came more and more under the direct influence of Constantinople; like Alexandria and Antioch it gave up its ancient rites of worship for those of the Byzantine church, and it followed the Greeks into ambiguous separation from Rome in the middle ages and definitive schism after the Turkish conquest of 1517. Thus it came about that the premier and some exclusive rights in the two great sanctuaries of Christendom, the church of the Resurrection ("of the Holy Sepulchre") at Jerusalem and the church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, are in the hands of the dissident Orthodox Church.

It is natural that from early times, long before the schisms, Christians from foreign countries belonging to different hierarchical organizations and with various customs of worship should have planted colonies in this most sacred of lands; and principal among them the Western or Latin church. But there was no question of the Church in Palestine being anything but specifically oriental and predominantly Byzantine until the time of the Crusades. During the brief continuance of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem (1099-1187) the crusaders reorganized the church in the Holy Land, without paying any attention to the rights of the Eastern bishops (who after a time were alleged, not certainly truly, to be schismatics); and it was then that there first appeared a prelate bearing the curious title of Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. The crusaders were driven away and their titular patriarch retired to Rome, but their church remained, side by side with the Eastern church. In 1230 Pope Gregory IX gave the custody of Latin Catholics in the Holy Land to the Franciscan Friars Minor, and they have stuck to their post to this day: for century after century they were quite or almost the sole upholders of Catholic unity in the Holy Places, persecuted by the Mohammedans and even by their fellow Christians and fellow sufferers under the Turkish yoke.

In the not-very-far-off days when conflicts between Zionist and Arab could be relied on to give us one sensation a week, the impression was commonly given that the native inhabitants of Palestine are all Mohammedans. It is true that of the 1,308,000 people west of the river Jordan nearly two-thirds are Mohammedan, and 355,000 are Jews (which includes a number indigenous to the country); but there are 105,000 Christians in the same area, of whom the great majority are Arabs.

The outstanding Christian group, on account of its history, its superior standing in the Holy Places and its age-long association with Constantinople, the New Rome of the East (they are still called *Rumi,* i.e., Romans), is the Orthodox.[1] There are 40,000 of them, all Arabs except for a few hundred Greeks composed of the monks of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre and their dependents. But that Greek handful exercises a complete hegemony. Every Orthodox patriarch of Jerusalem since 1543 has been a Greek; his bishops are Greeks; the other members of the holy synod are Greeks, and all are monks of the Brotherhood. Only the lower clergy are Arabs, and for the most part they are kept ignorant and inefficient. Since 1908 there have been repeated demands from the Arab Orthodox that this state of affairs should be

[1] The Turks usually back the Orthodox at the expense of the Catholics in Jerusalem because the Orthodox hierarchs were Turkish subjects, whereas the Catholic prelates, and many of their flock, were foreigners subject to European powers.

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altered, and the dispute has been carried on with a bitterness, violence and chicanery worthy of the politics of Byzantium at their worst. The Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre has come to regard itself as custodian of the Holy Places, not in trust for all the Orthodox churches, but as agent or mandatory for the Hellenic nation, which is assumed to have special interests and rights in these sacred shrines: one influential monk was allowed to go so far as semi-officially to express these "rights" as including actual ownership. The dispute flared up fiercely after the death of the Patriarch Damianos in 1931; but last year the Palestine government issued a draft ordinance which, if it is confirmed, will meet some of the Arab grievances and demands.

The "Latin Patriarchate"

The Orthodox patriarch having again become resident in Jerusalem after a period of living in Constantinople, the Holy See in 1847 revived the Latin patriarchate of Jerusalem as a residential see, with a staff of secular clergy;[2] but the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, under the Father Custodian and the Guardian of Mount Zion, continued to function and to have charge of most of the sanctuaries and parishes. Of the 25,000 Latin Catholics in Palestine and Transjordan, a good number are Europeans, but the majority again are Arabs. Here there is no question of a European caucus, and Arab clergy are encouraged, but the Latin church has an undeniably foreign look: the patriarch is an Italian, his auxiliary bishop an Austrian; the Franciscan custodian is an Italian, his vicar French, and his council is composed of a German, an Italian, an Englishman, a Frenchman and a Spaniard.

It is permissible to think that if Leo XIII had been pope in 1847, or if the event had happened under Pius XI, a Byzantine and not a Latin patriarch would have been sent to Jerusalem: for not only is Palestine properly an Eastern church but it contains an increasing number of Catholics of Byzantine rite—and they form the most unequivocally Arab Christian body in the country. West of the Jordan they are in the diocese of St. John-of-Akka (Ptolemais), whose bishop, Monsignor Gregory Hajjar, was born in the Lebanon in 1875 and lives at Haifa. Monsignor Gregory is one of the most vigorous of Catholic Eastern hierarchs, and his personal appearance is equally striking—he, with Mar Ivanios from India and Monsignor Czarnecky of Poland, was the sensation of press photographers at the international eucharistic congress at Dublin some years back. During his thirty-eight years of episcopate the "Archbishop of Galilee," as he is popularly called, has seen very remarkable progress, and his flock now numbers some 25,000 souls. There are about 5,000 more across the Jordan, and these since 1932 have formed the diocese of Amman. These two Byzantine bishops depend on the Melkite Patriarch of Antioch, who also has the title of Jerusalem and maintains a vicar in that city.

The "Denominations"

These, then, are the chief Christian bodies in the Holy Land today—but they are far from being the only ones. All the principal "denominations" of East and West have their establishments, often with tiny groups of local converts, generally from some other Christian body; some even of the more obscure sects are represented, so that Jerusalem and its environs can show an amazing collection of religious disagreements.

Of these lesser bodies the most important is that of the dissident Armenians, because of their ancient and extensive rights in the Holy Places rather than because of their number and prestige. But in these respects their importance has grown of late on account of refugee immigration and of the influence of Monsignor Elisha Turian, an enterprising, learned and holy monk who was their patriarch from 1925 till 1931. Monsignor Elisha longed for the reunion of Christendom and not seldom turned his eyes toward Rome; but prejudices are deep-rooted in Palestine, and he got no encouragement from the local Catholics. The Russian Orthodox have an imposing range of buildings in Jerusalem, a relic of the days of tsarist ambition in the Near East and huge pilgrimages from "Holy Russia"; but there are now only a few Russians, monks, nuns and lay people, in the city.

Taking one thing with another, it cannot be said that Christianity in any form is seen at its best in Christ's own land. The history of the Latin Catholics, the Orthodox and the Armenians in particular has been for generations marred by mutual jealousy and sectarian quarreling, manifesting itself in many ways. This spirit in many of the leaders communicated itself to the people, and in the centers of population (chiefly Jerusalem itself) Arab lay folk of more than one church were demoralized by a financial charity on the part of their clergy which was zealous and lavish rather than careful: which meant, of course, that some people sold their ecclesiastical allegiance to the highest bidder.

There is less real religion among the indigenous Christians in Palestine than there is among their fellows in neighboring Syria: they have been longer and closer in touch with European materialism and secularism (not all of it Zionist). The further away from the towns (and here, alas! Jerusalem and Tel Aviv must be bracketed to-

[2] There is only one real patriarch in the Latin church, namely, the Pope himself. He of Jerusalem is only an archbishop without suffragans (but with patriarchal precedence), having jurisdiction of the Latins of Palestine, Transjordan, and Cyprus.

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gether) the better they are, and in Galilee and Transjordan a good traditional peasant piety is found both among Catholics and Orthodox. It is in these districts, too, that there is most movement back to Catholic unity: for here the memories of sectarian strife are less bitter, and here the Orthodox have under their eyes a non-Latin Catholicism that shows them a better way out of their tutelage to Greek masters than by intrigue in Jerusalem; they see the Catholic Melkite bishops at Haifa and Amman and their flocks, men of their own race, rite and language—and they do the obvious thing.

The British genius for policing has modified the more fantastic manifestations of irreligious fanaticism in Jerusalem, but it takes more than police to root out the feuds and prejudices of many centuries, especially in a land of such long memories that a Greek is called a Roman: where one can be spat upon and reviled as a "Nazarene"—as I was—when leaving the traditional site of the Upper Room (now a mosque) on Mount Zion on Maundy Thursday. But for all that Jerusalem is indefectibly The Holy City, and one day she will again be glorious within. Meanwhile, *rogate quae ad pacem sunt Hierusalem. . . .*

Christmas in Bethlehem

How the holy season is celebrated in the birthplace of Christ

By Arthur Settel

ON CHRISTMAS EVE, the bells of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem will toll their message of peace and good will to a world torn by strife and war. The inspiring sounds will girdle the globe by radio and all humanity, regardless of race and creed, may listen. In Palestine itself thousands of Moslems and Jews and Christians will witness the picturesque ceremonies in and near Nativity Grotto. This Christmas interest will be keener than usual because of the peculiar significance the holiday has for a world in transition. Let us pause for a few moments at the venerated shrine where once the shaggy, star-dazzled shepherds from the Field of Boaz came hastening to announce their "tidings of great joy."

Bethlehem is a picturesque hamlet, with its cobbled streets and ruddy, blue-eyed women who wear the steeple-crowned headdress of their Frankish ancestors of crusading times. Its townsfolk are early astir on Christmas Day.

No broad tower or fine dome lends dignity to the austere basilica of the Nativity which covers the hillside grotto where tradition says Jesus was born. Its charm is veiled, its grimness resembles that of a fortress.

But life moves apace in the forecourt which a dozen years ago was still rough paved, camels drinking from its ancient well, caravans and motorcars mingling and bronzed Arab sheikhs, in striped "abayas" and ebony "agals," chatting with dapper Europeans in linen suits and pith helmets.

From a high-ceilinged room, white-washed, of spartan aspect, fitted with portable apparatus, a group of British and Palestinian engineers will gaze down upon the abrupt valley below where a footpath winds toward stony Tekoa, birthplace of the Prophet Amos.

Primitive people still dwell in tent communities on the hilltops as in the days of the patriarchs, growing their durra grain, herding their flocks, and entirely unaware of the miracle science is performing before their very eyes as these engineers send the Bethlehem chimes around the world.

In the belfry of the Church of the Nativity, the five bell-ringers will be busy at their task which lasts in all but seven minutes. The chimes are treble, alto, tenor, light bass and heavy bass. They will mingle in triumphant melody, changing over the barren hills, echoing across continents and bringing joy, perhaps sorrow, to the hearts of millions who yearn for peace.

Inside the Church of the Nativity

Dull and grim though the church may appear outside, its interior is extravagantly beautiful. Mosaics which forty years ago were examined by the Byzantine expert, William Harvey, and assigned to some twelfth-century restoration, ornament the walls. The church ceiling is made of English oak supporting a wooden roof covered with lead. The lower walls of the nave and aisles are without windows—again the suggestion of a fortress—but from the round-arched casements of the clerestory shafts of Judaean sunlight daily pour down on the lovely floor mosaics which were but recently unearthed.

When you descend the flight of sixteen steps leading beneath the church, it is difficult at first to see, although 53 silver lamps hang in the gloom. On the marble floor there is a silver star with a

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Latin inscription: *"Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary."* Around the recess burn fifteen lamps of which four belong to the Latins, five to the Armenians and six to the Greeks. Three steps lead down from the place of the Nativity to the Chapel of the Manger. This is a small cave draped with tapestry behind which one can see the rough, smoke-blackened walls of the cavern. After a short time you realize that the sacred grotto and subsidiary caves were in ancient times above ground. The same type of caves are still occupied in the hills around Bethlehem.

Christmas—January 7

To many Americans who this year celebrated two Thanksgiving holidays, the fact that Bethlehem has three Christmases will probably not appear out of the ordinary. Apart from the Ethiopian Copts who keep Christmas once every month (except March), the Latin, the Orthodox and the Armenian Churches mark the holiday on different days. The decision of several Orthodox Churches to adopt the Gregorian calendar has not as yet been accepted by the autocephalous Church of Jerusalem, which continues to use the Julian. And so, on December 24, January 6 and January 18, according to our reckoning, a little procession of automobiles (the Eastern Patriarchs are not asleep to modern methods of transportation), after traversing the intervening five-and-a-half miles at a slow pace, makes its entry into Bethlehem.

The Church of the Nativity is to be seen in all its glory on the Orthodox Christmas. Impressive and beautiful as is the Latin midnight Mass, celebrated in the modern Latin Catholic Church adjoining the southern side of the basilica, it lacks the *mise-en-scène* characterizing the Orthodox ritual. And the Armenian ceremony doesn't have the splendor of other functions occurring at other seasons at the Armenian Cathedral of St. James in Jerusalem.

The first part of the Orthodox service is taken by one of the titular archbishops from the Jerusalem Patriarchate. The prelate stands at the Patriarch's throne on the north side of the choir, receiving obeisance of the clergy who are to participate in the ceremony and who are first required to obtain the permission of the presiding ecclesiastic. In twos they appear from behind the iconostasis, genuflect before the royal doors and then before the archbishop whose hand they kiss. Not until the "Great Entrance" is reached in the liturgy does the Patriarch come down from the altar through the royal doors, taking his place on his throne. He is vested in white and gold and wears a mitre glittering with precious stones. On the right of the Patriarch, in a special stall, is the British District Commissioner of Jerusalem, wearing a uniform, while the consuls of the Orthodox powers are seated on the south side. The church is filled with the inhabitants of Bethlehem in their distinctive dress, the married women wearing the pointed white coif supposed to be a legacy from the Crusades, the men with little white skullcaps under their enormous yellow turbans.

The service begins with the descent of the Patriarch, his bishops and clergy and the official visitors into the Grotto of the Nativity. The procession winds down the narrow, slippery steps with enormous difficulty, everyone carrying a large lighted candle whose fumes, mingled with the incense, produce an atmosphere in the packed Grotto that rapidly becomes stifling. The Gospel is sung first in Greek and then, in deference to the mandatory power, in English, the English words sounding strange and unfamiliar in Byzantine chant. The solemn commemoration follows with a blessing of the Patriarch and the appropriate royal houses.

Then the Patriarch and bishops get onto their knees below the tiny altar to kiss the silver star. Meanwhile, in the dark shadows of an adjoining recess, a Franciscan, his hands hidden in his sleeves, stands by with a watching brief on behalf of his community, on guard for a breach by the Orthodox of the jealously-watched *status quo*.

Then comes the culminating act of the ceremony, the procession of the Patriarch three times around the entire basilica to the accompaniment of one of those majestic hymns characteristic of the Orthodox Church. Preceded by banners and processional crosses, by the richly vested priests and bishops in double file, the Patriarch moves in slow progress around the building, flanked by the Commissioner and the consuls and blessing the thronged congregation, many of whom kiss the hem of his vestment as he passes by. By an ingenious mechanical device, the candelabra in the nave, ablaze with lights, are swung slowly from side to side while the incense mounts upwards in coils of fragrant blue to the fragmentary mosaics of Emperor Manuel Comnenus and past these to the open timber roof once covered with lead given by King Edward IV of England. And all the while the choir is chanting the hymn that begins:

> "Glory in the Highest to Him, who is born today in a cave,
> Of the Virgin, the Mother of God, in Bethlehem of Judaea."

The sounds of other services, in other tongues, mingle with this in harsh cacaphony. At their respective altars to the south and the choir Jacobites and Copts seem to be competing with one another in the production of noise. Shrill supplications in Syriac and in the language of the Pharaohs offer a discordant accompaniment to the Greek chants of the Orthodox. The Ethiopians who, as I have said, keep Christmas every month except March, attend as visitors at the altar of their fellow-Monophysites, but there are no Armenians.

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Christmas, December 25

His Beatitude the Latin Patriarch comes in state to Bethlehem about one p.m. on Christmas Eve, and after being welcomed by the faithful of the Latin flock and the Franciscans, enters the Church of St. Catherine, adjacent to the Nativity, for Pontifical Vespers at 1:30. At 10:30 Matins begin, to be followed at once by midnight Mass.

After the Latin Patriarch has been ceremoniously vested, Mass begins. While the *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* is sung, which echoes the song of the Angels to the Shepherds in the Field, the veil over the statue of the Infant Jesus which reposes above the high altar is removed. At the consecration the clear ringing of the sanctus bell is sounded in thunderous echoes from the convent belfry, announcing to all the world once again that "Christ is born." After the Mass a procession is formed and the Patriarch carries a small statue of the Child Jesus to the Grotto, placing it first on the traditional spot of the Nativity while the Gospel for Christmas is sung. At the words in Verse 7, "And She brought forth her first-born son," the Gospeller pauses, the Patriarch takes up the statue and removes it to the site of the Manger, while the Gospeller continues, "and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." After the Gospel the procession returns.

Low Masses are said in the Grotto by many priests in turn from midnight to late in the afternoon of Christmas Day, almost without interruption. There is a second Pontifical Mass in Bethlehem at 8:30 in the morning, and a visit to Shepherds' Field by the Latins in the afternoon.

Christmas, January 19

Sunday, January 19, being January 6 old style, is observed by the Armenians as the commemoration of Christ's Nativity as well as His Baptism, and by the rest of the Eastern Churches as the commemoration of the Baptism in the Jordan, called by the Greeks the Theophany, or manifestation of God. All the East celebrated Christmas on this date until late in the fourth century, when the churches adopted "December 25" (now January 7 by our reckoning) which had been previously observed in the West. Only the Armenians cling to the original Eastern custom.

The Armenian Patriarch makes his formal entry into Bethlehem about 9:30 on January 18. At two o'clock the Patriarch is ceremoniously escorted into the Basilica of the Nativity, visits the Grotto and goes to the Armenian transept where Vespers are sung, followed by the liturgy. In the evening at midnight, while the Greeks are having their Epiphany liturgy in the Basilica, the Armenians have their Christmas liturgy in their transept, followed by a pontifical liturgy in the Grotto when the Greek services are over.

The Blessing of the Waters of the Jordan—in celebration of the Theophany—is one of the most picturesque services of the year. On the banks of the Jordan near their Convent of St. John the Baptist, the Greeks have a large compound with an open-air altar where the liturgy is sung at noon on the eve of the feast. This completed, the clergy at two o'clock go to the River Jordan, embark in several small boats and there sing the Theophany service. It consists of readings from the Old and New Testaments dealing with the mystical uses of the water, and concluding with the Gospel of the Baptism. The officiating Archbishop then blesses the water, using a flower-decked cross, and later asperses the congregation. The moment of blessing is the signal for pious persons to immerse their children or themselves in the river and collect the holy water in bottles for future use. The whole service is repeated again the next morning, usually at dawn.

Christmas every month

The celebration of Christmas by the Ethiopians every month except March (similar, of course, to the custom of regarding each Sunday as the commemoration of the Resurrection) added to Latin, Greek and Armenian dates produces a total of thirteen celebrations of the Nativity yearly. Their lesson of peace and good will cannot be brought home too often; it is too bad all the world does not have more than one Christmas a year.

Line in the Morning

This cruel season when the weather
Blue dusk to dawn grows steadily colder,
And a man's breath is a blown feather
Over his shoulder,
The picket marchers take the air;
Slashed with silver knives of wind—
Fortitude counseled by Despair—
The banners of their breath are thinned.

From the warm cave, the crowded burrow,
Where close night-long the sleepers lie,
They come to carve with flesh a furrow
In stone, so they march steadily.

Nothing left them but the air
For fire within against the cold,
With smoky valiant banners where
The young and grey-faced, thin and old
Death-dogged, carry signs that swear
Their blood-in-Christ-brothers "Unfair."

Oh, disinherited in this world,
Heirs of heaven after death,
With flags of courage flung and furled
On every alternate breath!

JOANNE DIMMICK.

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Reply to Jacques Maritain

An American does not agree with a Frenchman's position, as stated in the pages of this magazine

By John Kelly

THE FIRST and greatest sacrifice which a nation in arms requires of its citizens is the sacrifice of reason itself. There could be no more painful demonstration of this than the alacrity and enthusiasm with which M. Maritain has entered into the atmosphere of the present war. To many of his admirers—one might almost say his followers—his attitude must occasion something approaching dismay, or even alarm. His statements, as recorded recently in THE COMMONWEAL,* indicate, explicitly and implicitly, a grave lack of focus on the objective realities of the situation. These statements are politically naïve, and theologically unsound. Like many educated persons today, who desire at all costs to retain their cherished ideas and the life founded upon them, M. Maritain has confused his cultural with his religious affinities. He seeks to proclaim the justice of the war which France and England are waging, on the basis of Catholic theology; whereas in the whole corpus of that theology very little warrant will be found for making such a justification.

The problem confronting M. Maritain has been faced by Christians from the time of Christ Himself. Many of them were torn between their very natural desire to see preserved the empire in which they lived, and which was actually more synonymous with civilization than any other empire, and the specific commands of Christ to eschew violence, on which the preservation of that empire unquestionably depended. Lactantius, for instance, laments: "When Rome, head of the world, shall have fallen, who can doubt that the end is come of human things, aye of the earth itself. She, she alone is the state by which all things are upheld even until now. . . ." (*De divinis institutionibus,* VII,20.) We are familiar with this line of thought today, when it is asserted that it is the empire of the Allies upon which all things depend; but the answer given by Lactantius and the other early Christians is different from that of Maritain. Saint Justin Martyr, for instance, says: "For it is not right to answer fighting with fighting, nor does God wish us to intimidate the wicked: but He has exhorted us to lead all men away from the shame and cupidity of the wicked by patience and gentleness." (*Apologia I pro Christianis, XVI.*) Tertullian likewise insists: "For although soldiers had come unto John and had received the formula of their rule; although likewise a centurion had believed; the Lord afterwards in disarming Peter unbelted every soldier." (*De Idolatria, Cap. XIX.*) And also the thirteenth and fourteenth canons of Hippolytus of Rome: "Soldiers may not kill even if ordered to do so. No Christian ought to volunteer for military service nor become a soldier unless he is forced to by his ruler. Let him who bears the sword beware lest he shed blood."

Now M. Maritain chooses to scrap all this, and base his case on Saint Augustine's opinion regarding war, with its emphasis on the "just cause." "A just man can fight justly for maintaining public peace at the command even of a sacrilegious man, when what is commanded him is either not contrary to God's precept or not certainly against it; thus although the king may commit sin in giving the order, the soldier obeying the order to fight is innocent." (*Contra Faustum,* Cap. LXXV) and again: "The just man should have no concern, upon this matter, than this—Is the war which is to be undertaken a just one? Has he the right to make war; for not everyone has this right?" (*Quaest. in Heptatauchum,* VI, 10a.) This Augustinian position passed over into Scholastic theology without serious modifications. By way of all this, M. Maritain sees the current war as a just one; moreover, it is such a just war that one only wonders why it was not undertaken six years ago.

Knowing the Cause

Any assessment of the justice of a war presupposes in the first place that the cause of the war should be known. "It is important to know from what causes and by whose authority men take up war." (*Saint Augustine, Contra Faustum,* Cap. LXXV.) Is the cause of this war really known? M. Maritain does not seem altogether certain about it. At one point he says that the "decisive cause" was the promise to Poland. He says that a war must be judged by its decisive cause, and not on the basis of its more remote origins. "When the decisive cause of a war is fidelity to a promise made to a people which is a victim of savage aggression—then that war is a just war."

*This article was written without reference to the article "Just War" which appeared December 22, but as an answer to "To My American Friends" (October 13) and the letter to the Editors which followed it (November 24).

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Now how many persons in France and England think that they are fighting for Poland? Certainly their governments know better than this, and know better also than to offer it to their peoples as the cause of the war. Instead the Cabinets offer various other "causes" of the war from day to day; and these are usually associated with the general "wickedness" of the German government. We find, however, that M. Maritain agrees with the Cabinets in considering this wickedness to be a cause also. "Iniquity and violence have met; the Marxist opposition to Christianity has embraced Hitler's opposition to Christianity." It must, however, be Hitler's particular opposition to Christianity which arouses so much the governments of "those two ancient Christian lands," France and England, for they do not consider, like M. Maritain, that a general opposition to Christianity as such on the part of another power ought to provoke them to warfare. Quite the contrary, for they have sought (and would still welcome) an active alliance with the Marxist segment of the opposition to Christianity; and the Cabinets were noticeably chagrined when such an alliance was frustrated.

In short, M. Maritain's implication that France and England are fighting for Christianity ignores history. Did England ever consider that the fierce and frequent persecutions of Christians, conducted by the Sublime Porte throughout the nineteenth century, was a just cause for a war against Turkey? Far from so doing, she considered "the balance of power" so much more important than the fate of Christians that she joined with their Turkish oppressors to wage war against "Holy Russia" in the Crimea.

Far more important than any cavilling at M. Maritain's political assumptions is an examination of his theological position with regard to the war. He brings to our attention the notion of a "decisive" cause for war. This term, "decisive cause," is very useful to M. Maritain. It implies, of course, that there are other causes for the war (might we perhaps also invent a theological term, and call these others the "real causes"?); but these he sweeps aside as "remote," and insists that the Polish debacle, illuminated by a sudden desire for a crusade to save Christianity, brought about the war, and that this was a just cause for a war. By this reasoning, we shall have to hold that Germany could have fought a just war against France when that nation occupied the Ruhr district and placed a large number of Germans under military supervision, and that, in this instance, Germany did not do so merely because might was unquestionably triumphing over right. But the Christian cannot maintain this line of reasoning; and he cannot, as M. Maritain now does, ignore the plain circumstance that the cause of this war lies in a disastrous series of omissions and commissions in which the present Allies played an unjustifiable and un-Christian part.

These are not "remote," as M. Maritain pretends, but conspicuously immediate. The theologians do not deal with anything but the real and general cause of a war; they do not speak of a "decisive cause." In determining the justice of the cause, we are urged to take all things into account, and to consider moreover that even if a war be decided to be just, it may nonetheless be "unlawful because of the wrongness of the intention of him who makes war . . . it is necessary that the intention of those who fight be a right intention, that is, that they purpose to do good or avoid evil." (*Summa Theol.* II-II QXL, Art. I.) Beyond doubt, M. Maritain in the nobility of his spirit believes that the Allies purpose in their peace to do good and avoid evil; but for how many of us is such a belief possible?

And war aims

It is even impossible to find out what the ostensible intentions of the allies are, since they do not seem to know themselves, and are continuously inventing new war aims, some of which contradict each other. Clearly no satisfactory theological position can be based on an appraisal of aims and intentions which it is impossible to discover. In Augustine's view, the good to be attained by the war must be reasonably supposed to be greater than the certain evils, material and spiritual, which war entails. If this was true in Augustine's time, how much truer is it today, when only the most naïve person could imagine that anything but a "victor's peace" can result from the present conflict; and this result will be the more certain, the more prolonged and bloody the struggle becomes.

It is probably a consideration of this sort which induces Monsignor Barry O'Toole to take a position indicating that no modern war can be justified. "Thanks, therefore, to the draft, modern nations are enabled to wage offensive war on so gigantic a scale that we may never presume the adequacy of its alleged justification. On the contrary, the presumption is decidedly against the possibility of such a war being justified." (*Catholic Worker,* November, 1939.) A sophistry might, of course, be devised to indicate that France and England are not waging an offensive war, but merely a defensive one; but this is not a use of "defensive" that holds in any theology. In this war, both sides are offensive and aggressive. M. Maritain does not allege that this is a defensive war, but insists that it is an offensive one, which is justified; but such justification, one fears, is to be found only in the obsolete "Decretals of Gratian." ("Whoever dies in battle against the infidels is worthy to enter into the heavenly kingdom." "The enemies of the Church are to be coerced even by war." Clearly, a position more worthy of Islam than Christianity.)

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What is most amazing in M. Maritain's position is his apparent enthusiasm for this war. He is not content to regard it as an odious right justly exercised ("Jus belli est odiosum, et poena ejus gravissima; ergo restringenda est quoad fieri potest." Suarez, *De Caritate*). In fact, he must be rather sorry that the war did not start sooner, for in their resort to war, M. Maritain sees the most striking evidence of the "strength of soul and moral greatness . . ." of those two "ancient Christian lands," France and England. "The salvation of Europe has begun. I am absolutely convinced that western civilization will be saved. . . . I know that this night is not a night of despair but a night of resurrection." And again: "Quite obviously it is for the common good of civilized humanity that France and England suffer and fight and that Poland has been martyred."

Now with all this the Nazis would agree, for such is the theology of *Blut und Boden*. Von Moltke, for instance, says of war: "It upholds in men all the great and noble sentiments—honor, self-sacrifice, virtue and courage. It is war alone that saves man from falling into the grossest materialism." But when a Christian attempts to adjust the commandment of Christ to the special circumstances of the world and the time, he cannot do it so glibly, or with such enthusiasm as M. Maritain displays. Saint Augustine made such an adjustment, but he did it with something approaching despair: "Let everyone then, who thinks with pain on all these great evils, so horrible, so ruthless, acknowledge that this is misery." (*The City of God,* Book XIX, Chap. VII.) There is no vision of strength of soul, moral greatness, or salvation in the justified war here. "The great abundance of dying men made all hell rejoice at its riches, and give itself up to sport: for certainly the ferocious wars, and disastrous quarrels, and bloody victories—now on one side and now on the other—though most calamitous to men, afforded great sport and a rich banquet to the devils." (*The City of God,* Book III, Chapter XXVII.)

Joe Plans to Prosper

By JAMES ROGAN

PERHAPS one of the few Wisconsin farmers without worries about where to plant what on his land is Joe Stromstad of Coon Valley in La Crosse County. If God disposes as Joe and the government propose, his 138 acres during the next five years will be planted according to a prearranged land use plan in corn, grain and hay crops. The plan also includes the disposition of pasture and woodlands, all figured to tenths in acreage. Since 1934 Joe's farm through the expert assistance of the Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service and careful husbandry has been the subject of a thoughtfully-executed land use plan. In that year the government began the Coon Creek experiment, the first erosion control project in the United States to demonstrate on complete farm units soil and moisture conservation methods.

The Coon Creek project comprises a 90,000-acre area in the hilly region of southwestern Wisconsin. In this area or watershed, drained by Coon Creek into the Mississippi River, are about 800 farms, of which 419 are cooperating with the service. This cooperation consists in putting into practice plans which involve good soil conservation, such as converting steep hillsides to woodlots or pastures, terracing and strip-cropping.

During the past summer Joe's farm was singled out for a visit by a joint tour of the Department of Agriculture's five action agencies operating in Wisconsin. On a mild, sunny June afternoon thirty men and women tramped over Joe's land and saw the practical results of a scrupulous land use plan. They listened to his own description of the transformation from run-down and eroded soil to the "good earth." They saw terraces which Joe claimed he had found no harder to plow and plant than level ground.

What seemed to be the foundations of an old building running down a thirty percent slope turned out to be a terrace outlet, a combination of sod, masonry notches and a diversion dike to provide a runoff for rainfall on the terrace and at the same time keep the water from gutting out the banks. In 1934 the slope was more of a gully than anything else and coming too close to the farm buildings for comfort. Twenty acres of bright-green alfalfa told its own story of what makes Wisconsin America's dairyland and also provides a sponge-like matting to catch and hold rainfall. Joe's alfalfa acreage has increased from six to twenty during the past five years.

Other changes effected on Joe's land during the years of this service program were noted in a sheaf of papers handed to each visitor. These included the conversion of eight acres of cropland to pasture, the change of forty-seven acres of wooded pasture to ungrazed woodland, the planting of one acre of trees, a timber stand improvement on nine acres, grain acreage reduction of nearly fifty percent, and hay acreage increase of one hundred percent. The importance of these changes cannot be underestimated. For example, the conversion of wooded pastures to ungrazed woodlands is a valuable asset to moisture conservation. From experiments at the Upper Mississippi Valley Soil Conservation Station not more than twenty miles from Joe's farm, it has been shown that grazed woodlands offer little feed to cattle and greatly increase fire hazards. Add to this disadvantage a large percentage of water runoff from the de-

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nuded underbrush and the rainfall conservation effected by the change can be readily seen. So Joe keeps his cows out of the woods now.

The grain acreage reduction effected since 1933 is another step forward in soil and moisture conservation on Joe's land. Grain is not considered a soil-conserving crop since it provides a protective cover for the land only a few months out of the year. Spring grain land is not protected against water loss and soil erosion in April and May when intense storms may be expected in this section. Increase in the hay acreage means a dense protective covering for the land and a soil high in organic content which is in a condition to absorb a large amount of rainfall.

The significance of Joe's improved land must be multiplied by 419 to measure the significance of the Coon Creek Project. The reason? Because 419 farmers of 800 in the area have duplicated Joe's experiment in taking the advice of trained government experts in rebuilding their land. In reality not only Joe's 138 acres have been subjected to a "proper land use for every acre plan" but 43,850 of the 90,000 acres in the region.

Properly to evaluate the program, seventy cooperators and non-cooperators are maintaining farm account books in 1939. This study is now in its fourth year and may reveal interesting facts in the comparison between the economic returns from cooperating and non-cooperating farms.

The purpose of this description of Joe and the government's Coon Creek Project is not controversial. It is meant to show the advantages of a soil-building program resulting from cooperation between government and farmer. Only the high points have been touched in this résumé. If the experiment had not been undertaken in 1934, it is safe to say that thousands of tons of valuable Wisconsin topsoil would be resting in the Mississippi. And add to this the fact that 419 southwestern Wisconsin farmers have better land than they had five years ago and in another five years should have even better.

Two verses, expressing the purpose of the Coon Creek Project and given with the compliments of the project staff, might well serve to conclude this study. Its "SOS" is meaningful:

SAVE OUR SOIL

Countless worn out farms remind us
We must farm our soils to stay,
And departing leave behind us
Farms that have not washed away.

For when our sons assume the mortgage
On these farms that have our toil
They'll not have to ask the question—
"Well, Dad, here's the farm
But where's the soil?"

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

A VERY DIFFICULT work of exposition of a human character of quite exceptional perplexity and of great and enduring power has been accomplished by Helen MacKnight Doyle in her study, "Mary Austin: Woman of Genius." (Gotham House, $3.00). It was difficult precisely because its writer knew Mary Austin well in the days when that extraordinary spirit was grappling with handicaps both personal and inseparable for her environment that were so great, so baffling, that her victory over them all, and her achievement, are truly tremendous. Knowledge of this personal sort, it might be supposed, would help rather than hinder a biographer, but it does not often work out that way in practice, because too often books about persons by authors who knew their subjects have little more than the interest of ephemeral gossip.

But Dr. Doyle's portrait of her friend, while always truthful and never slurring over the many facts and impressions concerning Mary Austin's career and temperament that were so often adversely criticized in her lifetime, contrives at the same time to show her as a most human woman and as a great person—one of the very first rank in American literature and American life. Dr. Doyle's book is thus a portent, for it indicates a fact that a few people have always recognized, but which has yet to be generally established: namely, that in Mary Austin our country produced one of the most significant and original shapers of our life that has yet appeared in our midst.

Probably this book is only the first of many that will be written as the seeds sown so lavishly in so many fields of American thought by Mary Austin produce their fruit—and produce as well, undoubtedly, their tares and weeds. Many of these studies will come from those who, like Dr. Doyle, knew Mary Austin's influence in her habit as she lived. A busy lecturer and a great conversationalist, she was typically American, and typically the pioneering feminist. As a worker and organizer in all sorts of worthy causes Mary Austin's range of interests was prodigious.

Yet she was all her life at least a semi-invalid; moreover, as this book reveals what is hinted obscurely in her own autobiography, she was involved in marriage and family troubles of appalling perplexity and pain, ranging from merely sordid and uncongenial circumstances to the keenest tragedy of maternal frustration. Only a woman, and possibly only a woman physician, one also who was clear-eyed even in her love for and sympathy with her friend and having the vision to comprehend the true greatness of that friend, could have written so successfully—in the sense of conveying the inner truth—as does the author of this first full length study of Mary Austin. Some day, on the basis of this book and of Mary Austin's own autobiographical work—and probably the greater part of her many books, whether professedly personal or fiction or poetry or studies in religion and art and travel and her favorite subject, American Indian life, is consciously or unconsciously autobiographical—some qualified

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critic will appear to relate her work in literature to the main body of creative American art.

What emerges most clearly from the pages of this particular portrait is indicated in its sub-title. Whatever being a genius may be, whatever it means, that certainly was Mary Austin. Some power outside herself clearly used her as a channel of communication. She was a nature mystic; perhaps also she was a mystic who never attained the goal of mysticism, but was always haunted, almost obsessed, by its spirit. Her Catholic students may well come to believe that if she had not stopped short of complete submission to what she learned in Rome from Cardinal Merry del Val and Mother Veronica, or rather of real understanding, and had not persisted in her own lonely and undisciplined and self-willed pilgrimage on the paths of prayer and meditation, she might have found in Mother Church what she vainly sought after on by-ways and wastelands of the spiritual life. But such a view of the matter, of course, cannot possibly be accepted by the Mary Austins of humanity, or by those to whom the Church is only one among many possible routes by means of which the lonely and bewildered human soul seeks after the secret of preserving personal power at its highest pitch yet simultaneously achieving unity with the true Source of personality. Not until knowledge of the Church as the supreme and unique solution of the problem that is central among all the problems of life is more generally accepted in America will the baffled national genius of our nation, which, like Mary Austin, is friendly and partly receptive to the Church, but remains aloof from considering its full claims, reach the goal of its great endeavor.

There is a passage in Mary Austin's autobiography, "Earth Horizon," which bears upon this point. Speaking about her experiences in Mexico and her acquaintance with Diego Rivera at Guernavaca, where he was painting his famous murals of Mexican life, she writes: "It was a relief to me to discover there was no Nordic taint in Diego Rivera. There was Moorish blood, a little Jewish, Spanish and Indian. Especially the Indian; poised, centered, at home with his work." Now, as a matter of fact, Mary Austin's fling at Nordicism, like her many criticisms of other ideas and conventions, was confused and illogical. She really did not place much value on purely material factors in humanity, such as the influence of this or the other blood strain. It was the spirit underlying, infusing, empowering the blood and the flesh of men and women that really meant most to her. That in America, with its multitudinous strains of racial heritage, this or that particular national or racial strain was or should or could be dominant, she did not, I think, believe at all. But that in America all races might learn from the earliest, Indian races the secret of finding religious inspiration through their very closeness to nature, and should, therefore, in all their strivings after civilized development never lose touch with nature and the spirit behind nature this, it seems to me, was Mary Austin's faith. It was akin to her faith in the possibility of the individual finding unity with colective life without loss of personal values; indeed, to their enhancement. Her own work is a major contribution to the body of art that is pioneering the way for the future development of the culture of the United States.

Communications

NATURE AT THE HEARTHSIDE

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: If Frederic Thompson's lively survey of nature books had been extended to include foreign books of this kind published during 1939, it would undoubtedly have included "Le mystère animal" (Paris: Plon, 1939, 20 fr.), a symposium in the "Présences" series which includes the recently-translated "Communism and the Christians." It contains the minimum of "rhapsodic writing" which Mr. Thompson so rightly deplores.

A short sketch from the pen of Colette, the leading *animalière* in France today, opens the symposium. The essays in the first part are uneven, the best being Charles Sylvestre's thumbnail portraits of domestic animals and an historical account by Jean Canu of what man owes to animals. Daniel-Rops' contribution emphasizes the change in our attitude towards animals in the last few centuries. Before the modern era and even in the fables of La Fontaine animals were treated as simple annexes of human sensibility, and they were employed anthropomorphically to symbolize human traits. What motives were behind the gradually disinterested approach which came latterly to treat animals in themselves, abstraction being made from man as far as this is possible? Daniel-Rops first distinguishes between this material disinterestedness and a quickened spiritual interest which has grown up alongside the first and governed its progress. There is the humanist intention which hopes to arrive at a better understanding of that which is unique in man by examining that which he has in common with beasts, by delimiting this latter. Then there has been the effort (made by Maeterlinck and others) to draw some conclusions concerning the primitive conditions of human society before the advent of positive law by observing the communal life of insects. Finally there is a certain nostalgia for that free commerce with lower creation which is intimated in the Book of Genesis. Hence it would seem that recent scientific objectivity in nature study has its profounder roots in human desires, and in the thirst for knowledge.

The second part of this collection is the more valuable, being composed of comparative studies of the brain, intelligence, suffering, society and soul, as found in animals and in men. The last section of the final essay, by Abbé Plaquevent, resumes the patristic and medieval attitude towards the animal world. From the ontological viewpoint, every creature was recognized and valued as a halting half-expression of the Word, as a fragmentary seed-thought of the Divine Truth. Morally, they proceeded on the principle that since man is a microcosmos and nature his microcosmic projection, the animal kingdom is a spectra-analysis of the state of the human heart and mind. In Paradise, lower creation could not but express that peace and harmony which was in man, and now, after the Fall, it cannot but mirror the inquietude and hostility and nobility which constitutes the human kind. To their intensely moralistic and symbolic minds animals were natural sacraments and visible signs of the

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secrets of our hearts, reminding us of our ruthlessness and past innocence and present redemptive task.

Throughout these studies, in the scientific as well as in the literary ones, there is a constant pre-occupation with the twofold problem of how we can best arrive at a sympathetic understanding of animal consciousness and what the quality and meaning of animal suffering is. I do not think that Mr. Thompson would term "sloshy" their almost-unanimous agreement that our ultimate recourse must be to a natural and supernatural love of them. No one, I think, has expressed the intrinsic limitations of our knowledge of the animal world in more moving terms than has William James; the passage is worth recalling in full (R. B. Perry: "The Thought and Character of William James," Vol. II, p. 268):

> Sight of elephants and tigers at Barnum's menagerie whose existence, so individual and peculiar, yet stands there, so intensely and vividly real, as much as one's own, so that one feels again poignantly the unfathomableness of ontology, supposing ontology to be at all. They *are, eodem jure* with myself, and yet I with my pretensions or at least aspirations to adequately represent the world, can never hope to *sympathize* in a genuine sense of the word with their being. And the want of sympathy is not as in the case of some deformed or loathsome human life, for their being is admirable; so admirable that one yearns to be its sharer, partner or accomplice. Thus their forgiveness confounds one's pretension to comprehend the world—while their admirableness undermines the stoic or moral frame of mind in which one says the real meaning of life is my action. This great world of life in no relation with my action, is so real. (1873)

Nor does it seem possible to advance further than this position, along the lines of empiricist intelligence and sympathetic feelings alone. Having reached the impasse delineated by James, there remain only the dichotomic attitudes of sentimentality or patient, unrelated experimentation. Here also we are finally led to acknowledge the need for an integral synthesis. JAMES D. COLLINS.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE CCC

Techny, Ills.

TO the Editors: That the liturgical movement has life and power even for the ordinary layman is again demonstrated by experience in the nation's largest CCC Camp at Glenview, Ill. . . .

For several months Brothers, Jude and Jogues of the Society of the Divine Word have been giving catechetical instructions to the CCC boys under the general direction of the Reverend Francis Neuhaus, S.V.D. The work gained momentum recently when by way of trial a colorful, low-priced Sunday Missal was introduced.

Every Sunday morning the missals are distributed for use gratis. With surprising eagerness the CCC's have caught the spirit, alternating with the Brothers to join the priest at the altar in sacrificial worship.

The questions asked and the ready response in praying the Mass stand out like bold signposts declaring that the wish of Pope Pius X for an active and intelligent participation in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass can be realized even by the ordinary church-goers to their great spiritual benefit.

BROTHER ISAAC JOGUES, S.V.D..

MEDICAL MISSIONS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The urgent and pitiful needs of the medical missions as described to me by so many missionaries who ask for aid are the occasion of this Christmas appeal. Imagine whole populations riddled with disease, destitute of the most elementary aid, mothers and children dying for want of care. The people flock to the missionaries because there are no hospitals, drug stores, nurses nor any skilled medical workers to attend to their needs.

We are in touch with all these suffering populations, and do what we can to help them. But the generous aid of our Catholics of America would be an endowment for the medical missions. At this season of Christmas may I ask your readers to send us all they can for these suffering members of Christ?

REV. EDWARD F. GARESCHÉ, S.J., *President,*
Catholic Medical Mission Board,
8 and 10 West 17 Street,
New York, N. Y.

INDIAN MISSIONS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The Marquette League for Catholic Indian Missions, with offices at 105 East 22 Street, New York, has been requested by two Bishops of the Southwest—Archbishop Gerken of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Bishop Gercke of Tucson, Arizona, to make its Christmas appeal this year for the benefit of the Indian mission schools in their dioceses.

The fear that our Catholic children will be weaned from the mission schools worries these two missionary bishops. They tell me that public schools and schools of other denominations are making a strong bid for their Indian children. All these schools are well supplied with money and are doing everything possible to attract our Indian children from our modest mission schools. The Indian people themselves are very poor but they gladly cooperate with the missionaries in their endeavor to keep the mission schools open. They share their meager produce to feed the children, and willingly offer their services to repair the schools when the need arises. The Indians cannot help financially to buy school books, or gas and oil for school buses. Consequently, the eyes of these bishops, their missionaries and especially the children turn to us for support. If Catholicity is to flourish among the thousands of Indians in the Southwest, it is of vital importance for them to have Catholic schools throughout the various reservations. Consequently, the eyes of these bishops, their missionaries and especially the children turn to us for support.

May I beg the readers of THE COMMONWEAL in the name of the Christ-Child, Who came into this world in poverty, a small Christmas gift to keep these other poor children within the fond embrace of Holy Mother the Church? Won't you kindly give what you can in response to this urgent call from the Southwest? Surely, God will bless any sacrifice you may make for the sake of our little Indian children of the deserts.

REV. BERNARD A. CULLEN,
Director General, Marquette League.

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The Stage & Screen

Hellzapoppin

I DID NOT see "Hellzapoppin" when it was first produced and therefore am unable to make any comparisons between it and the second version. All I can say is I enjoyed most of the second version hugely. As is now well known, "Hellzapoppin" is not entirely a stage show; it occurs all over the house—in the boxes, in the aisles, even in the orchestra seats. There is a continual barrage of pistol shots; patrons get presented with a hen, with a stepladder, with twenty pounds of ice; people fight verbally in the orchestra; a woman intermittently parades all over the house asking in a loud voice for "Oscar"; a man annoys one whole orchestra row by crawling back and forth carrying a ladder and a radio, finally finding a seat on the stage where he remains through the proceedings; another man continually and incessantly tries to get out of a straitjacket. It is all completely mad, and if at times vulgar, not an unpleasant vulgarity. The high spot is perhaps the dance "Boomps-a-Daisy" which members of the audience dance with chorus girls in the aisles, and which I am told was participated in on the opening night by no less a celebrity than a former candidate for the Presidency, Mr. Alfred Smith. There are those who will never like it, though I believe they are few; those of us who have no brains or are willing to check them at the door will enjoy it immensely. And unthinking laughter is a wonderful corrective and anodyne. We need more of it in a world gone mad in a completely other direction. This doesn't mean that "Hellzapoppin" hasn't its sane moments. There is much excellent dancing, a remarkable exhibition of skill on wheels by Walter Nillson, Charles Withers in "The Old Op'ry House," Hal Sherman, of course Olsen and Johnson and a very pretty chorus indeed. *(At the Winter Garden.)*

Du Barry Was a Lady

COLE PORTER'S latest show has to commend it Miss Ethel Merman, who can put over a song as perhaps no other artist of today knows how to do; Bert Lahr, who as Louis XV can burlesque the Eighteenth Century in an Eighteenth Century manner and with Eighteenth Century grace; one of the loveliest choruses dressed in the most beautiful costumes that Broadway has ever seen; a graceful dancer in Betty Grable; and some of Cole Porter's second best music, which is better than most light composers' first. It is then a pity that many of the lines should be as obscene as anything ever dared in a burlesque show. Indeed it would be necessary to go back to the burlesque for anything approaching them in dirt, as well as in the suggestiveness of some of the dancing. "Du Barry Was a Lady" is indeed, in the words of one commentator, "Park Avenue burlesque." It seems a pity that so much talent should have gone into the production of something so utterly lacking in decency. It is the presentation of such shows which may very well bring censorship into the theatre, a consummation most devoutly not to be wished. *(At the Forty-sixth Street Theatre.)*

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Lilliputians, Russians and Lemps

"GULLIVER'S TRAVELS," the new feature length, Technicolor cartoon from Max Fleischer's studios, goes into none of the seamy details of the first adventures of Swift's tale. It has been toned down for children who should be delighted at its story; it laughs at human frailties and points out the silliness of war for adults who should be won by its satire. Lacking the lovable Disney animals and therefore the charm of "Snow White," "Gulliver's Travels" has a gay humor inspired by its little men and their accentuated foibles. Gabby, the Town Crier who whiningly sings "All's Well," who becomes the officious, bossy little big guy, will be everyone's favorite. Timid King Little and bombastic King Bombo, throwing their countries into war over disagreement about a wedding song, the three Blefuscu spies, acting like the Three Stooges, and many less important Lilliputians are comic parodies of man. Director Dave Fleischer might have spared us some of the vapid prince and princess scenes (they are Hollywood ham flavored with the good voices of Jessica Dragonette and Lanny Ross).

"Balalaika" is about a Russian prince who masquerades as a commoner, falls in love with a cabaret singer, and helps her into Imperial Opera. Imagine the girl's fury when she discovers that her friend is not only nobility but a captain of the ruthless Cossacks! And she, a 1914 Revolutionist! This was directed by Reinhold Schuzel, given a beautiful production with lively drinking songs, love songs and a scene from "Carmen" and "Scheherezade" thrown in for good measure. Nelson Eddy, fortunately, sings better than he acts. He never does warm up to stunning Ilona Massey who is lovely to see and to hear. Eddy's singing "Stille Nacht" in the trenches before an attack will bring forth many a tear. And so will the lavish finale when the lovers are reunited and the nobility gather in Paris to sigh over dear, dead, old Russia.

That modernized Louisa M. Alcott family from last year's "Four Daughters" can now be seen in *Four Wives*, a sequel that is almost as good as the original. It does not have the charming vignette quality of the first film or anything that compares with the startling entrance and performance of John Garfield, as Mickey Borden, the cynical musical genius who eloped with Ann (Priscilla Lane), but it does have an interesting solution and the same friendly, warm family theme. The impact of that characterization of Mickey is felt throughout *Four Wives* when Ann, discovering she is soon to bear his child, becomes so obsessed with the past and Mickey that she cannot face the future. How the brood of Lemps (Lane Sisters, Gale Page, Claude Rains, May Robson) save Ann from a breakdown with the help of Eddie Albert and Jeffrey Lynn makes absorbing cinema fare under Michael Curtiz's direction. Homey and humorous touches abound in *Four Wives* as babies (born and adopted) become the main topic of conversation and prepare for the next sequel in the Lemp series.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books of the Week

Liberal Qualms

The Catholic Crisis. George Seldes. Messner. $3.00.

IT MAY BE SAID of Mr. Seldes that even his non-partisan attitudes are strikingly partisan. There are few writers so certain that they are unswervingly just, and so open to criticism on the score of misrepresentation. I for one regard this as a hopeful sign. The author of "The Vatican" could not be so deeply interested in Catholicism unless he were convinced, perhaps despite himself, that the Catholic faith is a force for truth and honor in the world. Mr. Seldes is a friend, though an extraordinarily touchy one, anxious to be commended for what he imagines are his own especial good qualities. He is a "liberal"—a believer in democracy, the rights of man, the cause of labor and the validity of the triumph over "reaction." Whatever smacks of "fascism" is extremely distasteful to him. Indeed, he used this horrendous word to describe well nigh everything that is a vigorous negation of his own point of view. No man can spot so quickly on a page of newsprint the item to which he objects as being anti-democratic heresy. I think one may say that Mr. Seldes is one of the few surviving liberal dogmatists.

This book is a survey of whatever in current Catholic activity strikes Mr. Seldes as deserving of his own private anathema. While admitting cheerfully that most Catholics are common people anxious to be tolerant of whatever will add luster to the common life, he feels that the "hierarchy" is a kind of secret Holy Alliance out to crush not the liberation of the human mind merely but above all the emancipation of the toiling masses. I am reminded of an old French priest who said that every time he went about in his soutane, the mayor of his village muttered "Encore les Chouans." The trouble is, of course, that Mr. Seldes knows the historical connotations of the word "prelate" but is ignorant of prelates in the flesh. I am sure that if he had spent two hours with the late lamented Bishop Conroy (since it is inappropriate to speak of the living), his treatise would lose in phraseology would it would gain in realism.

No doubt Mr. Seldes was encouraged in his frame of mind by his conception of the Spanish war. All his Loyalists are hungry and despoiled angels; all his Francoites are deplorable scavengers and allies of scavengers. But, however one may feel about the tragedy which laid Spain low, it is certain that many people quite as high-minded and idealistic as Mr. Seldes picked the General simply because they could not stomach what the other side was doing. Perhaps they are somehow erroneous in fancying that a murdered religious is even so a murdered human being. But at least the fact remains that the religious was shot down like a dog, and I suggest that it is neither historical nor altruistic to ignore the shooting. Only by admitting that can one begin to understand at all what has been going on in the American Catholic mind.

For a good deal has been going on. So profound is the disarray of our society that the Catholic also cannot very often tell what sunders reason from emotion. We are all of us at best creatures of the facts and fears which we cull from the great mass of such things served up by life. I have said long since that we "must agree to disagree" if we intend to put the faith which binds us together before the opinions which must inevitably sunder us. Now it is undoubtedly true that some of the things Mr. Seldes reports are not to the credit of the Catholics responsible for them. I would not myself set up Mayor Hague as a model, or agree to remove a jot or tittle from the disapproval of anti-Semitism voiced by the late Pope Pius XI. The poor in spirit may well be scandalized by deplorable phenomena now associated with the Catholic name. I myself would go even farther and regret that slander and calumny and bearing false witness are no longer unknown amongst us, owing to the introduction of tactics for which no justification whatever can be found in Christian tradition.

These matters are symptoms of the deep disease of our time. But I would suggest to Mr. Seldes that every violation of the commandment should be dealt with reverently, for the Commandment's sake. It is because the injunction to love one's neighbor is divine that the act of hating him becomes evil. The roots of Catholic life are not in the anxiety, the restlessness or the recourse to armed might (or to the force of numbers) which here and there characterize the outward scene. They are to be found where Benedict sought them out and found them—in the peace which the world cannot give, because it is the weapon of the initiate only with which the world is taken away. One simply cannot write about Mayor Hague as a Catholic without, therefore, taking into account the terrible grandeur of what in his outward political action is a negation of the Catholic spirit.

I should like, then, to suggest to Mr. Seldes that he go over his book very carefully, removing from it first of all what is merely biased, what is rumor and what is misstatement. That would mean a good deal of cutting. But if after that had been done, he were to diagnose the real faults that remain not as crimes against "democracy" (for literally everybody these days is guilty of assaults upon democracy) but as deviations from the law which from the beginning has been the ordinance of the Catholic life, there would be a different story to tell. If that were well done, we should have a regard for his book which is now impossible. For in a world across which Antichrist marches in giant strides, what impression shall one make who records that the Holy Name Society suppressed a speech or that somebody or other threatened to withdraw $20,000 worth of advertising from a Brooklyn paper? That is like reporting, in a room-full of patients dying of the plague, that the man in bed three has a corn on his toe. But Antichrist perverting even the elect—that, if it could be shown, would be worth writing about.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

BIOGRAPHY

A Victorian in the Modern World. Hutchins Hapgood. Harcourt. $5.00.

HUTCHINS HAPGOOD is one of those rare people who have remained not only abreast of their times but usually a jump or two ahead of them. Many will differ with Hutch's classification of himself as a Victorian (he is rather a modern who lived a while in the Victorian era), but as John Dos Passos has pointed out, he was certainly one of the people who definitely bridged the gap, as it were, between the two eras.

Friend and confidant of the great, the near-great and the lowly, Hutch became early a citizen of the world; liked, at times indiscriminately, many things; but loved most, publicized and helped foster what we know today as the labor movement. Viewed with suspicion by bourgeois and capitalist because of his labor sympathies, and some-

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times distrusted by labor movement men because he dared to say they were occasionally wrong, Hutch went pretty much his own way for nearly half a century, waited until he was seventy before finishing this book, and then pulled almost no punches.

Mayor Gaynor of New York; Terry Carlin, anarchist; Mabel Dodge Luhan; his brother, Norman Hapgood; Leo and Gertrude Stein; Mary Heaton Vorse and Susan Glaspell; Theodore Dreiser and Dorothy Day and hundreds of others Hutch has written about in his book and it moves with almost unflagging interest through 600 pages. Occasionally his prejudices show through as when he speaks of Dorothy Day as "genuinely religious and at the same time a friend of the labor movement.

To this reviewer Hutch Hapgood's metaphysics is not often clear and where it is clear, I find little to agree with, but that Hutch was a man of good will, a keen observer and truthful reporter, and in his attitude toward the labor movement, something close to a prophet, there can be no gainsaying. It was not fashionable in Hutch's time —as it has been in this one—to be a liberal and to support the labor movement, so there was no affectation on the part of this son of the upper middle class when he boldly and favorably wrote of labor leaders and radicals in the columns of conservative newspapers. Like Chesterton, he found no uninteresting things, only uninterested people, and his search was essentially one for the good, the true and the beautiful, even though one may disagree with his interpretations of some of the things he found good, true and beautiful.

Even most of the trivia in this, his autobiography, has a high interest value, such as Hutch's version of one of Mabel Luhan's parties; an unbelievably stupid letter written to him by one of the editors of *The New Republic;* and his own passion—acquired late in life—for dancing.

As in the autobiographies of most modern liberals, Hutch is careful to let us know how well-sexed he was. Unlike most liberals, however, Hutch had children—four of theme—to prove this. His life has been very full and very useful and his judgment of people is—so far as my personal knowledge of some of those in the book goes—extremely accurate. He could have told us more about his wife, Neith Boyce, and more about John Dos Passos but I think that if pressed, he will admit a little ruefully that he doesn't know too much about the former. However, Neith Boyce, who bore children to Hutch in New York, cooked for him in Key West, and consoled him in Florence, will tell her own story soon. It should be better than Hutch's. HARRY SYLVESTER.

They That Take The Sword. Nicholas Kalashnikoff. Harpers. $3.00.

IT WOULD not be in error to say that this is an autobiography, cast in the form of a novel. Its importance, therefore, is properly dependent on its documentary character rather than on its merits as a piece of fiction. The author is a Siberian, now living among us in exile, and the matter of the book is the life and development of a Siberian boy from his birth in utter poverty to his arrival in the United States after the collapse of the Democratic, revolutionary forces in Russia in the face of the Bolshevik dictatorship. It is a refreshingly dispassionate account of the protagonist's life as student, idealist, revolutionary and terrorist, told very humbly and sorrowfully in the hope, as the preface says, that other potential revolutionaries, like the author idealistic and uninstructed, may not be moved

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to "take the sword." It is one of the saddest books I have ever read.

The great, sprawling, mongrel nation of Russia, its gentle, benighted people, its utter non-comprehension of the tradition of Europe or European ideas, its misty, ill-directed idealism, all come alive in this book. After reading it, I understand for the first time how school-children of fourteen could become "intellectuals" and leaders in revolutionary movements, how a habit of juggling abstractions could pass as profound thinking in political matters. I begin to appreciate the utter hopelessness and inertia of the Russian people before 1914. And I cease to marvel that the bloody lunacy of the Bolshevik state could maintain power for twenty years. If the definition of tragedy be accepted as the creation of pity and terror, then this book is a very moving tragedy.

If Mr. Kalashnikoff wrote this book in English, he is to be complimented. The language is clear, and curiously old-fashioned in its rhythms and forms. Particularly vivid is the description of life in town and country before the Revolution.

J. G. E. HOPKINS.

Saint Vincent Ferrer. Henri Ghéon. Sheed and Ward. $2.00.

HENRI GHÉON has come along with another ably written book about a saint. This time it is the versatile Saint Vincent, who could do almost anything from healing a schism to turning a homely woman into a thing of beauty and a joy forever. This last item is a bit odd considering the fact that the saint takes an almost modern slap at the medieval use of cosmetics.

However, the motto "Heaven is my home" is the key to the life of a saint whose career was largely spent preaching penance. He preached penance to a people being torn from the Church by a schism brought on by pretenders to the papal throne. The author deals deftly with such difficult problems as the schism and the flagellants, without overlooking the saint who loved God's poor, be they in Valencia where Vincent was born, or in Vannes where he died.

Both the saint and the story are consolations in these days when old age is the bogey man, for Vincent found himself at fifty—found that preaching to which his Order is dedicated was to be his great contribution to the Church. The book gives many startling accounts of what the saint did and said. Quotations and descriptions are so apt one dog-ears many pages. However, a few pages might be completely folded over so glowingly do they describe the saint's deeds. These few pages could easily be de-miracled without damage to either dogma or devotion; likewise the author's use of such odd words as "opt" and "frenetique" that try not only your devotion but also your dictionary.

But withal, it is a good book about a great Spanish Saint who deserves to be better known and loved in Spain and elsewhere.

LINCOLN F. WHELAN.

SCIENCE

Self Improvement. Rudolph Allers. Benziger. $2.50.
Back to Self-Reliance. Matthew N. Chappell. Whittlesey. $2.00

THESE TWO VOLUMES deal with character improvement. Dr. Chappell, a New York clinical psychologist, would reintroduce self-reliance, or "emotional maturity," into American character. He holds that frontier conditions forced American pioneers to become "mature." Nowadays overprotection starting in the home, extending to the schools and continuing in civic life through WPA has made us infantile. For one thing, we are too dependent for our happiness and self-respect upon material possessions, which depressions can so easily take away. For another, religion has ceased to be a "ripening" factor in our lives. "Reason" must be used, according to Dr. Chappell, to supply the elements of a pioneer environment now wanting to us. In my opinion, ideals admirable in themselves are juxtaposed here with considerable psychological immaturity. The book is professedly non-scientific, but the author is apparently unacquainted with the classics of non-investigative psychology. Perhaps if he had not dismissed so lightly in his chapter on education the campaign of President Hutchins and Mortimer Adler, the "modern medievalist, [*sic*]" for teaching the liberal arts, this would not be the case. He would have a more complete picture of the good life and a better knowledge of the means thereto.

Professor Allers' book is striking in contrast. It manifests rich clinical experience leavened by broad classical humanist background. The author protests that he tells nothing the reader does not already know, but the order and clarity of his argument illuminates a wealth of complexities of human existence. After showing the need and possibility of improvement, Dr. Allers warns of its difficulty. "Self-knowledge is not a matter of course, not something man simply possesses, but something he has to acquire, or for which he has to strive. . . . 'Why seest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye; and seest not the beam that is in thy own eye?'"

Dr. Allers describes characteristic and frequent types of undesirable traits in reference to social life, work, natural human perfection and religious life. The psychological analysis of the motives, the background of these types of behavior is particularly keen and gratifying. The amazing and subtle ambages of pride and laziness are traced with a sure hand.

A final section tells the incipient self reformer "What to Know" and "What to Do." At first glance, one is disappointed here by a certain diffuseness of recommendations, but Dr. Allers is too competent a psychologist to rely on mechanical programs and panaceas. After all, his book deals with *self* improvement, and he has already forcefully proved that this is a task for the individual both because of the uniqueness of each case and because of the personal effort required.

HARRY MCNEILL.

The Philosophy of Physical Science. Sir Arthur Eddington. Macmillan. $2.50.

EDDINGTON claims that, though classical science attempted to investigate the physical world, it only succeeded in investigating what physicists conceived that world to be. The modern method, on the other hand, is a technique for investigating the kind of knowledge which is admissible as knowledge in physics. The physical universe is defined as the theme of a specified body of knowledge in the same sense as Mr. Pickwick is the theme of a specified novel. This definition, it will be noted, does not prejudge whether this physical universe really exists or not. The study of this universe is carried out by means of the method of scientific epistemology which considers the nature of the knowledge that we have acquired by the methods of physics. It observes the observer and seeks to discover what he actually observes.

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The author claims that this is the method which has raised theoretical physics to its present level. When Einstein questioned what we observe in molar physics he developed the fruitful field of relativity. When Heisenberg sought to discover what we really observe in the atom, quantum mechanics developed. This approach to the problem takes into account the fact that all the fundamental laws of nature are mathematical equations which are nothing but forms of thought. These, in turn, are founded on the constants of nature which are determined, so Eddington believes, by man's own sensory and intellectual equipment. They are ingrained in the nature of things and are revealed by the epistomologic method. Consequently they are *a priori,* they carry compulsion, and are more certain than laws derived empirically.

This view appears to be founded on the fact that all advances in theoretical physics are made by mathematics. Mathematics itself deals with the structure of groups. Consequently physical knowledge is restricted to the knowledge of group structure, though we may not know at all of what they are structures. Recognition of this fact, according to the author, does away with the dualism of consciousness and matter since group structures are a part of consciousness.

With this as a basis, the rest of the book is devoted to developing the scope of the epistemological method, applies it in various ways, criticizes the concept of structure and of existence, and ends with a synthesis of knowledge purporting to indicate how such views can be fitted into a general philosophy acceptable to a scientist.

The author does not claim that there is no objective universe though he does not explain how the objective part become apparent or exactly what relation it bears to man. He admits forms of knowledge other than that which he is discussing and so makes room for religion, free will and values of all kinds.

Eddington who, in his earlier writings maintained a balance between subjectivism and objectivism, now appears to have pitched his tent with the subjectivists. Yet this is not pure subjectivism. It is Kantian in form, if not in vocabulary, since it regards the sensory and intellectual structure of man as the factor that determines the form and the laws of the universe. Kant believed he had proved that the mind possesses *a priori* knowledge of the structure of the world. Eddington comes to the same conclusion by a different route but, if the a priorisms of Kant's day were correct, the present ones cannot be. If the former were wrong, the new ones may be true. If that is so, the structure of the universe alters as philosophers change their minds. Perhaps Eddington takes that into account, since he attributes only a reasonable degree of certainty to the kind of knowledge which he analyses. Laws of such changeable character fall short, however, of being compelling.

This is an interesting and thought provoking book. It reveals the trend of modern theoretical physics. It disavows empiricism and concludes that such an over simplification of thought cannot recur. Unfortunately, much of the argument is inspired by the necessity of circumventing Cartesian dualism, and this makes one wish for a more thorough understanding of the synthesis of matter and spirit according to the age-old Catholic tradition. For that would serve to halt the swing of the philosophic pendulum from the extreme of empiricism towards the opposite pole of subjectivism which is here approached.

WILLIAM M. AGAR.

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The Inner Forum

ANNUAL REPORTS of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul are now being made in all sections of the country. In the archdiocese of Chicago, for instance, where the Society has been functioning for over 80 years, the Society visited 3,540 homes and expended $519,369.85 during the past year. Every Sunday during the past year Chicago Vincentians also visited a number of hospitals and prisons. In Detroit the figures were 3,852 families, expenditures of $96,257, distribution of 33,000 articles of clothing, 1,100 children cared for. Other items on the Detroit report indicate some of the other purposes of the Society: 511 jobs were secured, 262 baptisms arranged, 84 marriages rectified and 233 persons brought back to their religious duties.

From the viewpoint of relief St. Vincent de Paul handles cases of an emergency rather than a chronic variety. Often the local parish "conference" steadily supplies supplementary aid in cases where jobs or regular relief agencies do not supply enough to take care of special needs. When a case has been investigated and accepted, the members assigned to the family in question are expected to visit the family once a week. Visitors always go in pairs and administer relief as unobtrusively as possible so that neighbors will not realize that a family is not making its own way.

Once each week the parish conferences meet under the guidance of a priest for prayer, spiritual reading and consultation concerning the families under their care. Four times a year the members receive Communion in a body in their parish church and attend the festival meeting of their Particular Council, or grouping of the local parish conferences within a certain area. Many indulgences are gained by visits, attendance at meetings, Vincentian prayers.

The primary purpose of all this activity is the sanctification of souls, the eternal salvation of the members and of the needy families. The Society was founded in Paris in 1833 by the student, Frederic Ozanam, in response to the challenge of certain atheists who thought they could refute Ozanam's ardent defense of Christianity by asking, "Where are your good works?" Since then the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has spread throughout the world; active membership now numbers 150,000 laymen.

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